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## House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DOYLE).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 24, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL F. DOYLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

### GUN AMENDMENT TO OMNIBUS PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) for 1 minute.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I rise today out of concern for the public lands bill that we are taking up. We will be taking up the Senate amendments to H.R. 146. I support the underlying goals of our Nation's conservation systems, but I am concerned about overreaching actions by the Federal Government negatively affecting the American public.

The original bill, S. 22, combined 170 separate measures—most of which have never received a committee hearing.

Last week, the Senate called up H.R. 146, an unrelated battlefield preservation bill, and substituted the text of S. 22. Because we have already passed an earlier version of H.R. 146, the measure can be shielded from further amendments. This is unfortunate. There will be no opportunity to amend this bill. By sidestepping a legislative process, we are not making this bill better.

Last week, there was an amendment that protects hunting and fishing, but it certainly was silent because it didn't need to be vocal at the time on the right-to-carry provision. But, on March 19, U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly single-handedly decided to block the government's common sense policy.

We can do better, Mr. Speaker, and we should do better.

### AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I rise today to highlight the critical investments in America made by this Congress and by the Obama administration through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to turn our economy around.

We are embroiled in the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Our economy remains in a recession that dates back to December, 2007. Our gross domestic product decreased 6.2 percent in the fourth quarter of last year. Housing prices have declined for 24 consecutive months. Unemployment is at a 25-year high—and rising.

More than 4.4 million Americans lost their jobs, including a staggering 651,000 jobs lost last month. In my district, one of the wealthiest in the Nation, applications for food stamps increased 79 percent over the previous year.

In the past 12 months, Americans have lost 4 years of wealth, upending the carefully planned retirement strategies for millions of our fellow Americans. Over the next 2 years, if we do nothing, as some propose, our economy and the American people will suffer an estimated \$2 trillion in lost potential, lost productivity, and lost earnings.

We know the price of inaction. The last 8 years left us a dire legacy we won't soon forget: Trillions of dollars of budget surpluses squandered; critical infrastructure repairs and improvements ignored; alternative energy research and development placed on the back burner; regulations neutered and the financial sector allowed to run amok; poverty ignored and allowed to grow; middle-class Americans saw their purchasing power decline dramatically while a privileged few saw theirs grow and soar; and millions of jobs and trillions of dollars of economic progress lost.

Mr. Speaker, we can no longer afford the inaction of the last 8 years. That's why this Congress acted, in concert with President Obama, to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It was a bold stroke to put people back to work and make critical investments in our Nation's infrastructure that have been so neglected in the last 8 years.

We acted to ensure the future prosperity of our country. The Recovery Act will save or create 3.5 million jobs, including 9,300 in my own district, and provide needed investment in education, energy independence, health care reform, transportation, infrastructure, and tax relief for the middle class.

While no one action we can take will instantly fix all of our economic troubles, our investments are showing progress. Thanks to the Recovery Act, shovel-ready projects throughout the Nation are breaking ground, putting people to work planning, constructing,

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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